



## Governor's Healthy Students Summit 2007

### Project Summaries

#### Local Wellness Policies/Nutrition

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## Arlington Public Schools' Comprehensive School Health Model

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Arlington Public Schools supports the implementation of a comprehensive school health model that promotes the healthy development of students. Healthy eating and health activities are critical to the well-being of all students and promotes academic success.

Arlington Comprehensive School Health Committee (ACSHC) works under the direction of the Arlington Public Schools' School Health Advisory Board (SHAB). These groups are comprised of the following representatives: students, parents, health professionals, educators, Extended Day Program, Arlington Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources, Employees Assistance Program, the Partnership for Children, Youth and Family and other interested citizens. Both committees will focus their work on activities related to implementing a comprehensive school health program which includes but is not limited to the Wellness Policy and its Policy Implementation Procedures.

The focus of Arlington Comprehensive School Health Committee is to develop and implement activities aimed at improving the wellness of students and staff. The ACSHC developed *Guidelines for Healthy Food Choices* for parents and classroom use. These lists suggested healthy snacks for children and adults. Arlington Public Schools' Office of Food Services held *Food Tastings* for various groups to determine students' reaction to new food items incorporating healthier foods. Staff conducted *Healthy Eating-Healthy Activities* workshops with County Council PTAs, school PTAs throughout the Arlington County, Student Advisory Board and Teen Network. Staff was photographed eating healthy foods to create *Posters* that model good behavior. Posters were displayed in schools and the Education Center. Arlington Comprehensive School Health Committee sponsors an annual *Forum on Keeping Students Healthy*. The purpose of this forum was to bring school and county staff together with citizens and parent groups that are currently involved in initiatives that promote healthier students or have an interest in starting an initiative within their school community.

The Arlington School Board adopted a *Vending Machine Policy* that states all vending machine products will meet nutritional standards to be promulgated by the Superintendent and revised periodically based on consumer interest, nutritional value, cost, and product availability.

Staff revised the *Health and Physical Education curriculum* to align with the Virginia Health and Physical Education Standards of Learning. Activities within these programs include the *Pedometer Initiative* that includes Walk Smart Virginia! and a *Bicycle Safety* program. Arlington also conducts *Safe Routes to School* activities that uses safe walk zone maps. A *Comprehensive School Health Website* provides a wealth of information on school system efforts to promote Healthy Eating and Healthy Activities, national, state and local articles and efforts aimed at student wellness. ([www.arlington.k12.va.us](http://www.arlington.k12.va.us) under Other APS Links-Comprehensive School Health). The school district with the support of the ACSHC has also teamed with Arlington County agencies and the National Alliance for Mental Illness to sponsor parent workshops and staff training on mental health issues that impact youth.



The Spotsylvania County Schools (SCS) Health Services Department began considering wellness initiatives in spring 2004. By the summer of 2005, the school division had secured a grant from the Mary Washington Hospital Foundation (MWHF). A Registered Dietitian (RD) was retained on a part-time basis, through the division's Health Services Department. The RD's charge was to initiate and coordinate the many SCS health and wellness programs. This grant program, originally titled, *Healthy Bodies through Educated Minds (HBEM)*, provided an opportunity for a nutrition professional to develop and manage the wellness programs independent of other demands and requirements. Furthermore, having a Registered Dietitian within the school division allows for the interpretation, translation, and implementation of meaningful standards at the local level. HBEM was designed to bring healthy nutrition and exercise messages to SCS's 24,000+ students and 3000 employees.

As the program progressed, it continued to receive MWHF financial support for the '06-'07 and '07-'08 school years. In June 2006, the SCS School Board approved a recommendation from school administration officials that the RD position become full-time and serve as the division Wellness Dietitian/Wellness Policy Coordinator. Also, the SCS School Board adopted a comprehensive and far reaching wellness policy. In a January '07 article, the Washington Post prominently featured the SCS program, referring to it as "perhaps the most comprehensive wellness policy in the region."

A multi-faceted effort, the SCS program thus far has focused on: (1) involving all departments and all levels of division faculty and staff in formulating and implementing initiatives; (2) providing balanced choice vending and ala carte beverages and foods served in the schools beginning in 2005. These SCS nutrition guidelines were in advance and consistent with recommendations recently released by the Institute of Medicine in April 2007; (3) with assistance from Germanna Community College nursing students, a five year program tracking anthropometric, blood pressure and optional lipid profiles on approximately 500 students from each of the divisions 28 schools; (4) conducting a successful pilot program offering non-food rewards in classrooms through a grant made possible from Virginia Action for Healthy Kids (VAFHK). SCS was one of five state-wide award recipients. Additional items for this program were supplied through the Virginia Department of Health Dental program, the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association (SUDIA), and Dole Nutrition; (5) organizing physical activity events, including AFHK *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge* (involving three schools and approximately 600 students, parents, teachers); provided equipment tool boxes at select elementary schools for the use of Longwood University's *Learning In Motion* physical activity program; (6) utilizing the "train the trainer" approach for nutrition education teaching strategies and techniques; (7) providing healthy eating nutrition messages to SCS audiences and the local community. Two such efforts incorporate utilizing students and faculty both in front and behind the camera: a) The SCS Public Information Office and Media Instruction Department produced nutrition education media programs which have received state recognition from the Virginia Dietetic Association. In addition, the Virginia Commonwealth University Dietetic Intern program also contributed to these recent film productions, b) Healthy eating posters displayed in schools were made available through collaboration with Vision Photography. A school nutrition webpage is available for nutrition messages and can be accessed at [www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us/nutrition](http://www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us/nutrition).

Other efforts have included dietitian led classroom nutrition education; the anticipated formation of a wellness curriculum sub-committee to ensure that the division's health and wellness initiatives are appropriately incorporated into the curriculum; one-on-one nutrition counseling; parent wellness workshops conducted at Ukrop's Supermarkets; and media and community outreach through radio and newspaper interviews. The Wellness Policy Committee will oversee the monitoring, assessment and evaluation of wellness programs, and a recent ad-hoc interdepartmental division wellness group will address current and future division wellness efforts.

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# SHARING A DIETITIAN AMONG THREE SCHOOL DIVISIONS

PARTICIPANTS: WOW (Working on Wellness) Children/Youth Program of Augusta Medical Center and the Augusta County, Staunton and Waynesboro City Public Schools

## OBJECTIVES

- Nutritional analysis using Nutrikids software
- Menu modifications in collaboration with school nutrition/food service managers using taste tests, customer satisfaction surveys, & cycle menus
- Education/marketing of healthy nutrition and school meals using "point of sale" information, newsletter articles, bulletin board ideas, & web site information
- Improvements to the cafeteria environments
- Evaluation and documentation

## HISTORY

Collaboration and partnering have been the foundation of this project from the beginning. BMI data collected on area school age children for the past three years found that a higher percentage of our children are overweight than the national average. The idea for a shared RD was initially proposed by the Nutrition Workgroup - a group of health professionals and representatives from community agencies working in the area of children's nutrition.

## FUNDING

The Augusta Hospital Corporation Community Health Foundation through the WOW program provided full funding for the 2006/07 school year. A multi-year grant from the Foundation was awarded to the three area school divisions to provide continued partial funding for the shared dietitian's salary. This grant is for \$20,000 a year through 2009/10. Augusta County schools will pay 50% of the balance for salary/benefits; Staunton and Waynesboro each will pay 25%.

## WHY THIS IS WORKING FOR OUR AREA

This program's success is due in large part to the effort paid to continuous, open communication. The dietitian attended School Board meetings, Regional School Nurse meetings, School Health Advisory Board meetings, and served meals in many of the 33 school cafeterias. Monthly meetings are held with the school nutrition managers and additional information is received from parents, students, teachers, and school administrators. Most importantly, there is a genuine spirit of cooperation and respect among the participants of this project - a recognition that each organization has its own set of strengths and that we can best improve the school nutritional environment by pooling those strengths and resources.

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